

Distro watch

What's behind the free software sofa?

SWAY 1.0

The first stable release of Sway, a “consistent, flexible, and powerful desktop environment for Linux and FreeBSD” as creator Drew DeVault calls it, has been released. In a refreshingly honest release announcement (<http://bit.ly/LXFSway1>), DeVault explains how “nearly 300 people worked together, writing over 9,000 commits and almost 100,000 lines of code” for this release, which has been completely overhauled for a much better experience compared to Sway 0.15, which was, by DeVault’s admission, a “buggy, frustrating desktop to use.” Download it from: <http://bit.ly/LXFSway1Download>.



Sway 1.0 is a new desktop for Linux and FreeBSD.

REACTOS 0.4.11

A new version of the open source operating system that enables you to run Windows applications has been released. As the release statement notes (<http://bit.ly/LXFReactOS>), this new version brings substantial improvements to the kernel that improves performance and addresses a number of issues. A compatibility issue with PCs running Intel’s Skylake (or later) processors has been addressed, so it can now run on more modern hardware, and Win32 improvements have been included as well.



ReactOS 0.4.11 is an open source re-implementation of Windows NT.

ROSA R11

ROSA Desktop is a Linux distro that was once a fork of Mandriva Linux, and the latest version comes in four desktop flavours: KDE 4, KDE Plasma, LXDE and Xfce. In this latest release, the Linux kernel has been updated to 4.15, and there’s added support for installing the distro on devices with fast M.2 and NVME solid state drives. If your Russian is any good, you can read up on the release announcement at: <http://bit.ly/LXFROSA11>.



ROSA is a Russian distro with a choice of desktops.

ANTIX 17.4

This distro based on Debian’s current ‘Stable’ branch has had an important update that is now available to download. antiX 17.4, ‘Helen Keller’, comes with an updated kernel which has been patched to mitigate against Meltdown, Spectre and CVE-2019-8912 vulnerabilities. All packages have been updated to Debian 9.8, and there are improvements to the localisation of applications plus improved icons and themes. Find out more at <http://bit.ly/LXFantiX174>.



antiX 17.4 brings some important security updates to the distro.

OPINION

WA-HEY, WAYLAND



Jonni Bidwell wants only the best for you.

“ So GNOME 3.32 came out, and to celebrate I finally switched over to Wayland. Of course, it wasn’t all smooth sailing. As is well documented, I am fond of *Guake*, the drop down terminal.

Unfortunately Wayland has no truck with programs that want to grab keystrokes without focus, so its handy F12 hotkey didn’t work. Since I spend most of my time writing in *LibreOffice* (we both know that’s not true – Ed), pressing this key resulted in the current paragraph becoming the first item in a list.

Frustrating, but of course this is expected behaviour; it’s just that under X, that F12 keystroke could be intercepted to prevent this unwanted listifying.

The future of tech journalism may well sadly be listicles, SEO-friendly headlines and simplification beyond recognition. But such bilge and bunkum will never grace these pages. Instead have a handy two-sentence guide to getting *Guake* working in Wayland. Disable the F12 shortcut in *LibreOffice*. Go to GNOME’s Keyboard Settings and bind F12 to the command `guake -t`. The second argument toggles visibility, so will do the desired thing whether the terminal is up or down. Done and the flat Earth disc keeps on spinning.”